

FABRICS AND COLORS

Dame Fashion Outdoes Herself in New Designs.

IMITATIONS OF MOTHER NATURE

Paragon Model-maker Takes Pains to Get Laces Dyed the Exact Shade of the Cloth It Is to Adorn, and the Result Is a Flat Effect in Decoration—Velvet Trimmings for Lace Blouses Among the Latest Fads—This Is to Be a Ribbon Season.

Special Correspondence of The Post.
New York, March 31.—The "openings" in the large stores these past weeks have left me in a very enthusiastic frame of mind. I thought I had fully grasped the trend of the new fashions for gowns, and it seems that Fashion had still some surprises left, even for one who has been studying her very faithfully.

About these cloths, I ask you to compare in your mind's eye a fabric as fine as a new glove, and with something of a new glove's surface, and, moreover, a new thing in navy blues or browns or bright greens, but something colored like the rose or like a cloudless sky on a summer day or like the fresh young leaf in springtime or the soft gray of the part of the flowery branches of the lilac tree. Never was cloth so exuberant before, so joyous and gay, and then the pretty whites in self-colored effects that I cannot quite describe to you; they really demand to be seen.

For instance, one pale blue cloth frock was embroidered in identical pale blue cloth silk thread and tiny little pieces of cloth to resemble the outlines of flowers and leaves and laid with raw edges on the cloth. Yet another pale cloth gown had a real lace yoke worked over in a wonderful fashion with tiny stripes of the pink cloth of the gown. It was fascinating, and was mixed with pink coral. This mania for a flat decoration I mean this enriching the surface without any contrast of color—is a fundamental feature of the modes of this particular moment.

FABRICS IN EFFECT.

As I think I have told you before, the Paragon model-makers are taking no end of pains to get their laces dyed to the exact shade of the cloth on which it is to go. One evening gown that I saw was of a mysterious pinkish yellow tone, and had a lot of fine guipure lace upon it the exact tone of the silk of the dress. An evening cloak at the same place had also imitations of lace identical with the fabric of the dress.

One of the models that has led up to this flatness of effect in the decorative element is that just now everything must be subservient to silhouette. Line and composition of line are the dominating factors.

However, I am getting positively profound; let me go back to a few more details of my cloth frocks. Most of them had lace neck bands, that is, the neck band was covered with lace. From three to five rows of narrow black ribbon velvet decorated the majority of these, and the effect was certainly a very happy one. A row of the narrow velvet should cover the fastening in the neck band at the back.

I hope the following suggestion will help some of my readers out. Any light cloth gown with guipure on Maltese lace and a row of narrow black ribbon velvet on the very extreme of style, which requires the lace taken off and dyed the exact shade of the gown.

A gray cloth gown, remarkable for its simplicity, differed altogether from those just described, but in a way that was striking. The high collar is covered with thick chiffon; steepled bands are carried round the shoulders and across the front. There is a little vest matching the collar, and inside this is a white waistcoat of silk, which reaches to the cuffs of the long sleeves, falling over the hand. The bodice fastens sideways with three buckles, and the skirt in the front, the opening hidden by a rounded tunic which looks at which the undergarment of the same shade as the gown itself, but is covered with horizontal stitched bands of a darker tone of cloth.

Smart Color Combinations.

A new element of smartness is shown in a new cloth gown with a wide black collar in plain. This is accompanied a gown with close-set stitching, the jacket opening with a row of buttons and lace fastenings at the side. Navy blue still remains greatly in favor for the waistcoat of silk, which reaches to the cuffs of the long sleeves, falling over the hand. The bodice fastens sideways with three buckles, and the skirt in the front, the opening hidden by a rounded tunic which looks at which the undergarment of the same shade as the gown itself, but is covered with horizontal stitched bands of a darker tone of cloth.

There is a dream of an evening gown which comes from Paris. The bodice and the skirt are of the softest white or cream satin with sprays of faintly-tinted lilies in pink and green tones, slightly beaded round the tunic, worked into it in a row of white silk fringe, plain and unfringed; this is rounded by the front and opens over another satin under-skirt, the front of which is covered with beaded of the most delicate crepe de chine, over which is draped a flounce of tulle. Each end of the flounce starts from either side of the front, and then at the waist forms a straight line so that the extra flounce falls in folds. The bodice, which is very little, is straight at the waist, showing a marvelous combination of color. The foundation is chine satin. Along the neck is some light-tinted tulle, which is bordered in metal threads, while across the front comes a crossway piece of crepe-de-rose velvet, edged with a row of close-set diamonds, a most artistic combination of tints. The sleeves are as small as possible, one of lace and one of green.

Latest Lace Blouses. Velvet hands beautifully a few of the newest lace blouses, and a very distinct contrast is chosen with regard to color. One guipure looks charming on the fair woman, with the deepest fancy velvet collar band, and twists of it again around the arm and the waist. The flat, round low centered with a jewel may appear on the breast if it is becoming, and will look well, too, in the hair planted somewhat above the left ear. By the way, the largest roses, quite without leaves or any greenery, are also being worn in this way, or right on top of the head, without so much as a bud resting on the forehead. But the full view of the flower should be seen from the front; it is only a matter of piling the hair up prettily that will secure this.

Here is a prediction which some of my readers may be able to fulfill for themselves. It is evident that the embroidered muslin collars our grandmothers used to secure and work for themselves with such patient care will be worn this summer on the light cloth costumes. I saw one on a gown at one of the three best dressmakers in New York, and have consequently routed out some fine old specimens I have, and have dispatched them for renovation. These collars were all made for larger neck measures than

Gown of cream-colored china crepe. The skirt fits tightly about the hips and is very full below. A black band of cream satin ornaments the bottom of the skirt. The lower half of the waist is covered by a very wide draped belt of satin, knotted at the side. Yoke and sleeves of silk, covered with guipure. Orange flowers form a wreath around the neck and small bouquets on the gown. White tulle veil.

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THREE DISTINCT TYPES OF SPRING MILLINERY.



No. 1. White spiky straw, fancifully pinched and draped with white and green mousseline de sole, and bunches of wild roses.
No. 2. Toque of fancy parma straw. Around the brim is draped a dainty cream colored lace veil with scalloped edge; it is tied at the back and the ends fall over the hair. In front a pheasant is set in between loops and ends of turquoise blue velvet.
No. 3. This delicious spring hat of fine straw has the brim covered with blown roses and the crown hidden beneath folds of rose-colored velvet. The same velvet is used for the "choux" which fill in the under-brim at one side.

we use now; the half or whole inch of the neck thus left exposed in those days will be filled up by the silk, satin, or muslin, of a tiny guipure, and above that the collar band will rise.

Among the unmade robes displayed at the best retail stores are many of wool, with lace insertion and borders. One especially lovely one was gray muslin with the old-fashioned real sort—with the unchangeable square mesh. Inch-wide white lace insertion meandered in wavy lines over this material, and an embroidery finished the edges. The inserted portion was for the neck and bodice. The lower skirt was plain. A colored plate went with each robe pattern, showing how to make it up.

A Ribbon Season.

We mentioned last week that the Easter girl would revel in ribbons. Never before has there been such a craze for them. Ribbon sashes, ribbon belts, with fancy clasps; ribbons for the hair, for the huge bows on hats, for neckwear, narrow ribbon for trimmings of bodices, edges of flounces, or instead of braids and cords for designs upon costumes and for trimming the edge of neckties and stocks. These very narrow ribbons have threads running along one edge, or through the middle, upon which they are gathered. This saves a great deal of time and insures exactness in the gathers. The wide ribbons, those about five inches being the favorites, are used for stocks, with a not too large bow in the front and ends long to reach the waist and ends long. Sometimes the bow is omitted and the ribbon clasped together by a fancy brooch.

The polka dot is seen on ribbons as frequently as the silk and organdie, while others, the very handsomest, are in brocade on a satin background, with raised velvet flowers. The designs are Louis XIV and XV. Taffeta ribbons are flowed also in printed designs, mostly large and bold, and are very beautiful. These last are used on gowns, as a sort of abbreviated bolero, passing around the waist just under the arms, brought up to the bust and knotted there, the ends falling sometimes to the knee. A new use of baby velvet ribbon is to sew on one side of it lace half an inch wide, then weave it into a lattice, with

AN EASTER BRIDE.

The last of the works of the much-maligned George IV to be mentioned here is the enlarged and improved Royal Kitchen (at Windsor Castle). It stands—perhaps the largest single kitchen in the world—on ground where royal kitchens have stood from time immemorial. George IV it was who in 1828 gave it its lofty roof and top-light ventilators. Its splendid clock let into the stone walls, and its generally mediæval appearance. At either end of the kitchen is fixed an immense and venerable smoke-jack, whose origin is lost in the mists of antiquity. One of these annually has the honor of roasting the king's roast of beef. The foot-plate table in the center of the kitchen measures no less than 14 feet by 9 feet. The batterie de cuisine, in its brilliant array of glittering copper, is large enough to cheer the hearts of a small army of gourmands; and to show its office is no mere kitchen, one may mention that it has to make an annual visit to the manufacturer for restoration and repair. Lady Bloomfield says of this kitchen in 1882:

"The fire was made like Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace than anything else I can think of; and though there was no company at Windsor, there were at least fifteen or twenty large joints of meat roasting. Charles Murray (Comptroller of the Household) told me that last year they fed at dinner a hundred and thirteen thousand people."

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Oh, the licensed cruelty that is daily and hourly practiced in every city and town of the country by coarse, illiterate women to the poor little children that are put under their protection! Go into any park and watch the nursemaids congregate. How they chat while their poor little charges are shivering with the cold, or perhaps sleeping—sleeping with their heads over the slings of the mail-carts or perambulators, with the sun beating on their unprotected heads! Then, if they wake up and cry, just mark how they will be shaken and then, when the last moment for gossiping has arrived, the nurse suddenly awakens to the fact that she is late; and the poor little legs of the children are tired out, and if they cry with fatigue they are slapped, and they are forbidden to tell mother anything about it under dire threat of punishment. But even when the nurses are kind to the youngsters, I think that they would shock any mother if she could but hear the horrible talk that goes on, the coarseness of innuendo, the indecency of language. I would rather cook my own dinner and have an educated, refined woman as nurse to my children than have a professional nurse, with the coarsest ordinary servant to be with my youngsters constantly. You know what the Jesuits say: "Let us have the training of a child till he is six years old. We do not mind who has him after, for he will be with us." So it is.

The first few years of life mold the child's character. Give him a happy childhood, surrounded with refinement, teaching him generosity, consideration, and delicacy of feeling, and you may be quite sure that you have armed him for the battle of life. On the other hand, let him listen to ribald remarks, let him hear holy truths laughed at, and the best of names profaned, and it will be found that, in spite of, perhaps, an outer glamour of refinement which will come later on, he will be full of the brute instinct. Then the cruelty that is practiced on timid children. I can remember myself suffering agonies of torture and of fright, from which I did not recover for many years, when, as a small child, a fool of a nursemaid came into my bedroom late at night with a broomstick in her hand covered with a white sheet. I could not scream. My tongue clove to my mouth—but, oh, how my heart beat! It sounds comical enough to grown-up people, but to a timid, sensitive child it is simply alarming. I remember for nights and nights I was too frightened to sleep; I would never open a door for fear of seeing the terrible apparition again. Do you not think that this is the very refinement of cruelty? And, mark you, it is legalized. People would laugh at it. Then I have known people to leave nervous, highly-strung, hysterical children in their bedrooms alone, and in the dark, although the poor nites have piteously implored for a light. This is not spoiling the child—not at all. You cannot spoil a child out of fear. You must talk to him kindly, and teach him that God is above him, to guard and watch him during the dark hours of the night. But to tell him that he is a baby, and turn the gas out, and

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